'Mentally unstable' man booked for 'burning Quran pages'

SAHIWAL: A middle-aged man, reportedly suffering from some mental illness, was booked under Section 295-B of the Pakistan Penal Code for allegedly burning the Holy Quran *pages* inside a mosque at 55/GD village, Noor Shah, on Tuesday afternoon.

Noor Shah SHO Irfan Rasool told *Dawn* that the suspect was charged on the complaint of one Mazhar Bashera, a resident of 55/GD village. He says he promptly reached the village, cordoned off the mosque premises and arrested the suspect.

Section 295-B pertains to the willful defilement, damage, or desecration of the Holy Quran or any extract thereof, and carries a punishment of life imprisonment.

According to police reports, the alleged incident occurred after Zohar prayers in a two-room mosque, which has no regular prayer leader.

They say the complainant alleged that he witnessed the suspect committing the desecration of the holy book by burning some of its pages inside the mosque and immediately informed other village residents, who gathered at the mosque. He claims that other locals also "witnessed the desecration of the holy book by the suspect".

The FIR registered by the Noor Shah police includes statements of two "eyewitnesses," including one Shoukat, who confirmed the occurrence of the incident. The complainant also recorded a video clip of the act on his cell phone, which was later handed over to the police.

In the video clip, the complainant could be heard asking the suspect, who was sitting on the floor, questions about his act. The suspect appears unaware that he is being filmed and seems mentally unstable.

DPO Usman Tipu visited the mosque, collected video evidence and directed police to maintain law and order in the village.

To prevent any mob violence, the police relocated the suspect to a "secure location". Authorities acknowledged that the suspect appears mentally unstable. The locals told the police that the suspect had been living at the mosque temporarily.

The DPO say the suspect will undergo medical evaluation on Wednesday before being presented before a judicial magistrate. — **Correspondent**

Punjab cabinet ratifies ban on TLP

Govt also hands over administrative control of mosques, seminaries run by TLP to a group of 'moderate' clerics

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Punjab cabinet on Wednesday ratified the ban on the proscribed Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP).

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz presided over the cabinet meeting and approved the ratification.

Last month, the Federal government proscribed the TLP on the recommendation of the Punjab government following the violent clashes between the police and TLP supporters in Muridke in which eight people, including a policeman, were killed and over 1,600 were injured.

The Punjab government also handed over the administrative control of the mosques and seminaries erstwhile being run by the TLP to a group of 'moderate' clerics. The cabinet extended the scope of the Punjab Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) to the areas excluded from Tehsil Koh-e-Sulaiman and District Rajanpur. Grant-in-aid was also approved to enhance the capacity of federal and provincial law enforcement agencies.

The cabinet approved several new projects in the province including the recruitment of the "School Teachers Intern" programme in public schools and approved the Punjab Protection of Ownership of Immovable Property Ordinance 2025. The meeting approved a subsidy under the "High-Tech Farm Mechanization Finance Programme", under which the government would provide super seeders and other modern equipment at a 60pc subsidy.

The cabinet also okayed the proposal to launch the sugarcane crushing season by Nov 15 and approved an MoU for the Lahore-Rawalpindi High Speed Rail.

The meeting approved the establishment of the Air Punjab Private Limited Company as well as the QR code for retailers under the Prime Minister's Cashless Strategy. The meeting approved 'Mehrab Mahfouz Roshan' Punjab. It also approved an MoU for agricultural cooperation with Egypt. It approved the proposed summary of traffic fines and points system.

Funds were approved for the construction of a museum and a memorial in the National Bank Park. The master plan for the restoration, improvement and upgradation of the Lahore Museum was approved and provision of grants to the Punjab Transport Company for establishing electric depots for electric buses in different cities. The foundation stone of the Mass Transit Authority was approved in Gujranwala and it was exempted from the Central Development Working Party (CDWP).

The posts of interventional cardiologists, medical officers, technologists and nurses were approved for the cardiac cath labs established for district hospitals. Relaxation of ban on recruitment for Punjab Financial Advisory Services (PFAS) was approved and recruitment of staff in the Punjab Services Tribunal was also given the nod.

The cabinet approved the appointment of the CEO of the Punjab Land Development Company Limited and the appointment of the CEO of the Punjab Mineral Company (Private) Limited. Relaxation of restrictions on recruitment for new posts in Punjab Sahulat Bazar Authority (PSBA) was approved, while the nomination of non-official member and chairman of the Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA) was also approved.

The meeting also approved other projects in the province.

Allama Iqbal Express hits police van

Policemen save their lives by jumping out of the vehicle

By Abid Mahmood

NAROWAL: Allama Iqbal Express passenger train coming from Wazirabad to Sialkot collided with a police patrol van atSahuwala Canal bridge crossing on early Wednesday.

Luckily, no casualty was reported in the accident, as the policemen saved their lives by timely jumping out of the van.

The Allama Iqbal Express (passenger train) runs between Sialkot and Karachi via Narowal and Lahore.

The police sources say that the express train is sent to Wazirabad daily for service and maintenance.

They say that on Wednesday, the train was coming from Wazirabad after service, when the Sahuwala police patrol van, carrying duty officer Sub-Inspector Imran Ali and three constables, broke down on railway tracks at Sahuwala Canal bridge at 6am.

Meanwhile, they say, the policemen in the van saw the express train arriving and jumped out of the van.

The train hit the van and kept it pushing on the tracks on the canal bridge, they added.

According to two eyewitnesses, Afzal and Ansar Mahmood, the van driver tried to remove the police van, but to no avail.

According to police sources, all the policemen remained safe in the accident, while the van was severely damaged.

On receiving the information about the accident, teams from Sahuwala patrol police post and nearby police stations immediately reached the spot.

— Dawn

After the accident, the railway engineering team that reached the spot, with the help of locals, removed the damaged police van from the tracks and stored the traffic after a three-hour-long efforts.

Locals, including Ashir Hussain and Manan Khan, say that another accident had also taken place at the spot on August 16, 2025, when the Sialkot Express coming from Wazirabad had hit a car on the Sahuwala Canal bridge. As a result, the car driver was killed and another man was seriously injured.

They demand that a gate should be installed on the railway crossing near the Sahuwala Canal bridge to check such accidents.Malik Attaullah, Deputy Superintendent of the highway patrol police, was not available for his comment on the incident.

TLP leader's remand extended

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Wednesday extended the physical remand of banned TLP deputy chief Zaheerul Hassan Shah for further 10 days in a case of inciting people against the then top judge of the country.

ATC duty judge Arshad Javed heard an application of the police for extension of the physical remand.

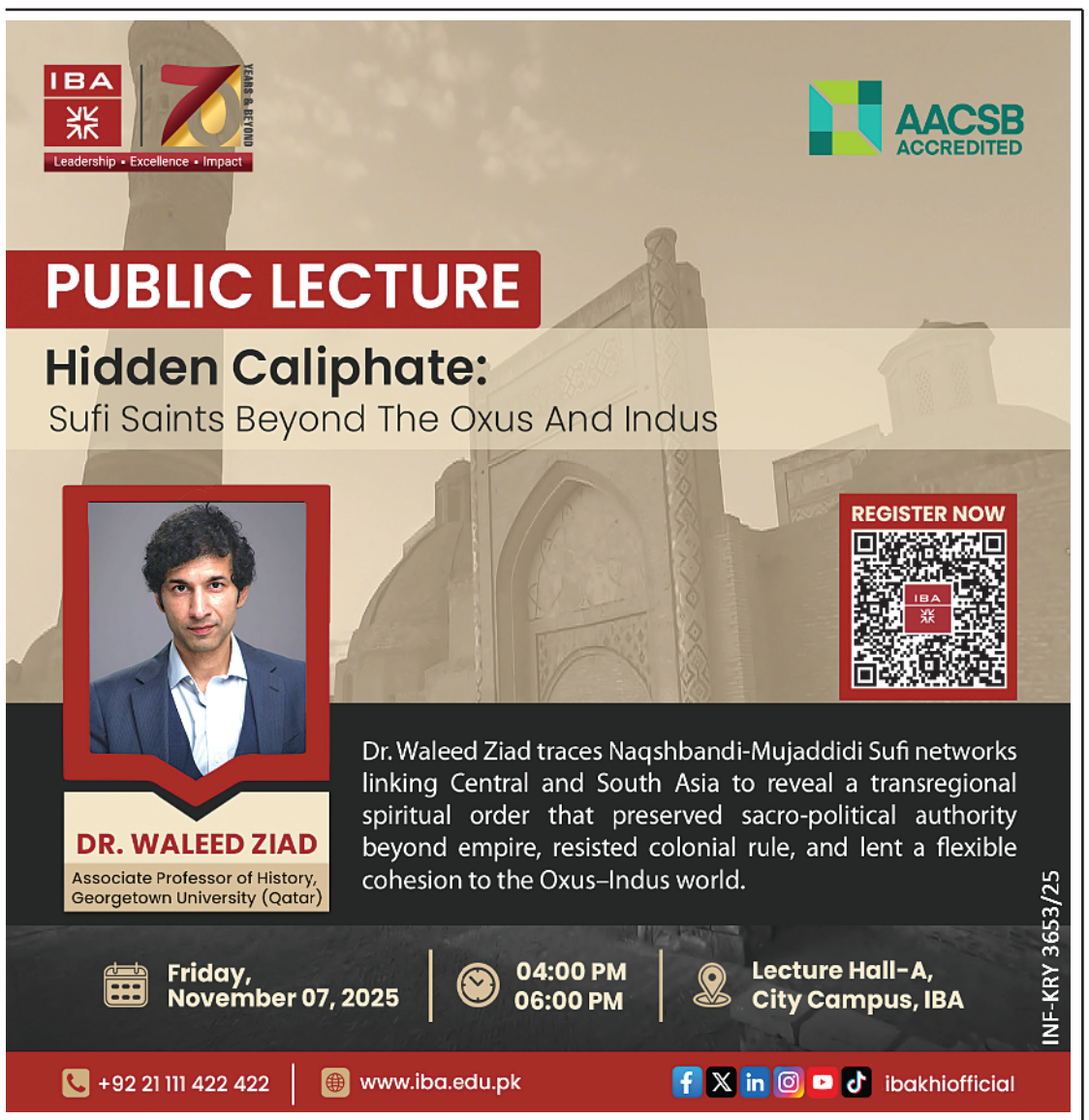
The police produced the cleric before the court on expiry of the previous six-day physical remand.

The investigating officer stated that more time was needed to conduct voice matching and photogrammetric tests of the suspect.

The judge extended the remand of the TLP leader for 10 days and directed the IO to ensure conduct of the tests before the next hearing.

Qila Gujjar Singh police had registered the case against the cleric in 2024. He is accused of delivering an inflammatory speech against then chief justice Qazi Faez Isa at a protest outside the Lahore Press Club.

Several FIRs were registered against the TLP leaders and workers in different cities after Shah had issued a call for violence against justice Isa. — **Staff Reporter**


IBA
70 YEARS & BEYOND
Leadership • Excellence • Impact
AACSB ACCREDITED
PUBLIC LECTURE
Hidden Caliphate:
Sufi Saints Beyond The Oxus And Indus
REGISTER NOW
DR. WALEED ZIAD
Associate Professor of History, Georgetown University (Qatar)
Dr. Waleed Ziad traces Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Sufi networks linking Central and South Asia to reveal a transregional spiritual order that preserved sacro-political authority beyond empire, resisted colonial rule, and lent a flexible cohesion to the Oxus–Indus world.
Friday, November 07, 2025
04:00 PM 06:00 PM
Lecture Hall-A, City Campus, IBA
INF-KRY 3653/25
+92 21 111 422 422
www.iba.edu.pk
ibakhiofficial

Labs' plea against PHC's price control powers dismissed

By Wajih Ahmad Sheikh

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has dismissed a challenge to the powers of the Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) to regulate prices of services provided by labs and diagnostic centres.

Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust and other diagnostic labs mainly assailed the Punjab Healthcare Commission (Pricing of Healthcare Services) Regulations, 2023.

The petitioners argued that the impugned regulations are beyond the confines of the Punjab Healthcare Commission Act 2010 with no lawful authority to fix prices of the services provided by the healthcare institutions, including the ceiling price.

A counsel for the Shaukat Khanum Trust stated that the petitioner/lab is a trans-provincial entity extending its operations also to the other provinces, therefore, the province of Punjab has no jurisdiction to regulate the affairs of such trans-provincial entities.

He said the impugned regulation may render operations of the petitioner in other provinces uncompetitive and not financially feasible.

The lawyers for the provincial government and the PHC opposed the petitions and defended the regulations.

In a 24-page judgement, Justice Raheel Kamran observed that the PHC Act 2010 clearly confers upon the commission authority to regulate and control the prices of healthcare services, including those provided by diagnostic labs.

He maintained that the contention that the Act only permits asking for display of price lists and investigating overcharging, without the power to control prices, appears to unduly restrict the plain language of the relevant provision. He rejected an argument of the petitioners that the imposition of pricing controls in the absence of demonstrated necessity, constitutes a disproportionate measure. He said regulating prices for essential healthcare services directly serves the constitutional mandate by preventing arbitrary overcharging and ensuring equitable access.

He ruled that the pricing controls, framed reasonably within the express powers conferred by the law are not only necessary but also represent a proportionate measure to fulfil a vital public interest and prevent undue financial burden on patients. He rejected another argument by some of the petitioners regarding the application of the regulations owing to their trans-provincial status.

The judge observed that the healthcare is primarily a provincial subject, therefore, where healthcare services are provided within a province the provincial government and its authorised commission retain the legislative and regulatory competence over those activities.

He said the services offered by diagnostic centres are integral to healthcare delivery and allowing varied pricing for identical services based solely on the facility type would undermine the very purpose of regulation, which is to protect the consumer from exploitation.

He noted that the application of uniform pricing controls for specific services across all relevant healthcare establishments is a rational and non-discriminatory approach to achieve objectives of the law.

"Therefore, the question of treating dissimilarly placed entities similarly does not arise and any such plea of discrimination is manifestly unfounded," he observed.

The judge said the counsel for the petitioners could not assert and provide any substantial material to demonstrate that capping the profit margin at 20pc is unreasonable or represents an irrational return on investment in the provision of healthcare services.

He dismissed the petition, ruling that the PHC is duly empowered to regulate and control the pricing of healthcare services rendered by healthcare establishments.

PAKISTAN BANKING AWARDS
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BANKING AND FINANCE, PAKISTAN
DAWN | A.F.FERGUSON&Co.
The 10th Pakistan Banking Awards 2025
The Definitive Benchmark for Banking Excellence
Pakistan Banking Awards 2025 Jury
SYED SALIM RAZA
Former Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (Chairman of the Jury)
Ms. SIMA KAMIL
Former Deputy Governor, State Bank of Pakistan / Former CEO, United Bank Limited
Mr. NAVED A. KHAN
Former President & CEO, Faysal Bank Limited
Mr. SHAZAD DADA
Founder & Managing Partner, Dada Partners Pvt. Ltd. / Former President & CEO, United Bank Limited & Standard Chartered Bank Pakistan
Mr. SHAHID SATTAR
Former President, Samba Bank Limited
Dr. ZEELAF MUNIR
Managing Director & CEO, English Biscuit Manufacturers (Pvt.) Ltd.
10 YEARS
Celebrating a Milestone: A Decade of Excellence!
Honouring Ten Years of Financial Leadership in Pakistan
SAVE THE DATE:
November 14, 2025
Entry strictly by invitation only.
PAKISTAN BANKING AWARDS 2025
For more information, please contact us at:
Tel: 111-000-427 Email: business@nibaf.org.pk Website: www.nibaf.sbp.org.pk
National Institute of Banking and Finance Pakistan
Pakistan Banking Awards